

He Cares

by Lehman Strauss

The sermon emphasizes that God cares for us deeply and encourages believers to cast their anxieties upon Him for peace and strength during trials.

Scripture: Job 5:6, Psalm 55:22, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:6, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Gods Care", "Anxiety Relief"

Description

Lehman Strauss preaches about the comforting truth that God cares for His followers, even in the midst of trials and tribulations. He emphasizes the importance of casting all anxieties upon the Lord, as highlighted in 1 Peter 5:7, to experience peace and comfort. Strauss shares personal experiences of facing anxiety and worry but finding solace in God's care and faithfulness. He delves into the difference between human anxiety and divine care, urging believers to trust in God's love and attention towards them. Through various Bible verses and hymns, he encourages listeners to leave their burdens with the Lord and find strength in His unwavering care.

Transcript

When troubles mount and pain increases, followers of Christ sometimes feel that they've been left to fight the battle alone. It can seem as though no one cares whether we are suffering or not; whether we are triumphant or we fail. And indeed, in the most intense moments of anguish, we may be almost beyond human help.

But we can take comfort and be encouraged by the sure, undeniable truth that God cares. The promise is clearly given in this wonderful verse: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

I found this out in a special way a few weeks after Elsie's illness began. As you read this chapter, may you become aware of the comforting truth that God cares!

Life has its ups and downs, its highs and lows. At one time or another, every man and woman faces severe trial. Even the Christian in his most prosperous state cannot escape the testings and tribulations, the pains and pressures that are common to us all.

"Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:6-7). Man's trials are not simply natural phenomena. Nothing occurs that is outside of the Creator's knowledge and purpose. "Man that is born of a woman is of

few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:1-2).

The problems themselves often do not hurt the Christian nearly as much as the worry and anxiety that arise from them. Anxiety disturbs the Christian's mind and destroys his motivation. I was made aware of this fact as my Elsie entered the fifth week of her illness. It appeared for a while that she was making progress with the therapy, but then she developed pain in her left side, and the therapy was temporarily suspended. While driving home from the hospital that evening, I detected a twinge of anxiety coming upon me.

Almost immediately the Lord brought this verse to my mind: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Many were the times I had quoted that verse while preaching to others. I can remember saying with strong conviction to audiences, "He cares!" Then I would exhort them to cast all their cares upon Him.

Now I was facing the severest trial in my seventy-two years, and I freely confess to a bit of anxiety. Then the Holy Spirit flashed into my mind that great text from Peter's pen. I knew that every word was true, because God had given it to Peter. I quoted the verse aloud several times as I drove along. Then I sang a little chorus I had learned in 1927, about the time I was saved:

He careth for you,

He careth for you,

Through sunshine or shadow,

He careth for you.

When I arrived home from the hospital, I had the strong desire to meditate on Peter's famous and familiar verse. These are the thoughts I jotted down.

I noted that the exhortation was a vital part of a passage dealing with Christians who were suffering (4:12-19). Peter referred to those who "suffer according to the will of God" (4:19). The sovereign God had allowed severe trials to come to those believers in accordance with His own wise and perfect will. Therefore, they were urged to "commit the keeping of their souls to him." That means they could entrust the safety and security of their souls to God, their faithful Creator.

When we come to verse 7 of chapter 5, it is apparent that their suffering was causing them some anxiety. They were beginning to worry. The word care in Greek is merimna, meaning "anxiety," or "a fearful and painful uneasiness of the mind." It is the crippling sin of worry that our Lord said chokes the Word so that it becomes unfruitful (Matthew 13:22). In my crisis hour, I certainly did not want to cut off the message and ministry of God's Word. That would have brought me a shameful defeat.

Paul had used the same word in its verb form when he wrote, "Be careful for nothing" (Philippians 4:6). He tells us not to worry about anything, for anxiety comes from not trusting God. Like Martha, at times we are "careful and troubled about many things" (Luke 10:41) when we should be anxious "for nothing." Nothing means not even one thing!

Peter told us what we are to do with all of our anxieties. We are to cast them upon our Lord. "Casting all your care upon Him." The Greek word for "cast" is ballo,, which means "to deposit with" or "to commit." While it is not the same word translated "commit" in 1 Peter 4:19, it does contain the same thought. We are to take our painful anxieties and hurl them--all of them--on the Lord.

In spite of the sickness and sorrow that had come into our lives, I knew that Elsie and I could live carefree. Then and there I decided to cast all my anxieties on my blessed Lord. The heavy burden was lifted, and my heart had peace. Every Christian who is passing through a severe trial needs the experience of Peter's text. He must place his burden upon Christ.

If I worry, I am saying that God doesn't care. But the Scripture says He does care--"he careth for you." Coming back to this verse really gave me something to think about. The Word tells me that I am not to have care, and yet my Lord does care. Is this a contradiction? Of course not! The Bible never contradicts itself. The word careth in "he careth for you" is a different Greek word. It is melei, meaning that someone or something is the object of care-- the object of attention, love, and thoughtfulness--rather than anxiety. Christians are the objects of God's love, and He therefore does care about us. Not that He is worried or anxious about us, but He does feel a personal interest in us. There is a difference between human anxiety and divine care.

In 1900, Frank Graeff wrote the following words. I have joined with others in singing them many times. Today I am singing them, but it is a solo.

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained

Too deeply for mirth and song,

As the burdens press, and the cares distress,

And the way grows weary and long?

Does Jesus care when my way is dark

With a nameless dread and fear?

As the daylight fades into deep night shades,

Does He care enough to be near?

Oh yes, He cares--I know He cares!

His heart is touched with my grief;

When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,

I know my Savior cares.

Today I have cast all my care upon my Lord. The psalmist said, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Psalm 55:22). This psalm divides into three parts. Verses 1 through 8 express David's complaint; verses 9 through 15, David's criticism; verses 16 through 23, David's confidence. In the first section, David was thinking only of himself. In the second, his thoughts were against his enemies. In the third, he turned to God. It was when he turned to the Lord

that he discovered God cares and that he could cast his burden upon Him. David was no braggart. He did not claim that he never worried. But he knew where to go with all his anxieties--he cast them upon the Lord.

Did you ever wonder if God really cares? When we doubt that God cares, we insult Him. The disciples heaped a gross indignity upon our Lord when they said in the midst of the storm, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" (Mark 4:38). Of course He cared. He had not said, "Let us set sail and be drowned." Rather, He had said, "Let us pass over unto the other side" (v. 35). The anxiety of the disciples showed that they were carrying their care instead of casting it on Him.

Think again about Martha, who was somewhat overanxious about temporal provisions. She became wrapped up in the affairs of this world. She said to Jesus, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" (Luke 10:40). Of course He cared! He was more concerned about Martha than she was for herself. She was filled with sinful care, that anxiety that breeds self-pity. The Lord saw the disease that had fastened itself upon her woman's heart. "Martha, Martha," He said, "thou art careful and troubled about many things" (Luke 10:41). Martha had many admirable qualities, but she lacked the one thing she needed most. It was the quality her sister Mary possessed when she "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word" (Luke 10:39). Mary had no worry because she had cast it all upon Jesus.

Verse 40 says that "Martha was cumbered." The Greek word for "cumbered" is perispao,, meaning "to be drawn away, to be distracted." Martha had a distracting anxiety that made her blind to the loving care of the Lord. She carried care with her that she could have cast on Christ. Her worry was a sin because it denied the love of the Lord Jesus.

Beloved, God has given us a remedy for the anxieties that arise from our trials. It is a distinctive characteristic of Christianity that the Lord Jesus Christ cares for those who put their trust in Him. The Christian can bring all of his anxieties to the Savior. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Not some of them, or many of them, or most of them, but all of them. When we heed Peter's inspired exhortation, we do not throw off our trials and afflictions, but we do get rid of the worries they cause. The poet has written:

It is His will that I should cast

My care on Him each day.

He also bids me not to cast

My confidence away.

But oh, how foolishly I act

When taken unaware!

I cast away my confidence

And carry all my care.

(Author Unknown)

Yes, there is peace for the mind and comfort for the heart in knowing that my Savior cares for me. I have cast my care on Him, but if I worry I will be taking that care out of His hands. Yet I have decided that He is more able to handle it than I. Our Lord is no mere bystander or chance spectator watching us in our affliction. He is our great High Priest, and He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebrews 4:15). The Christian who is set free from anxiety is stronger to carry on the service to which God has called him. Worry is a contradiction to a life of trust. Anxiety has never done anything good for me, and it never will. By the grace and power of God, I hope to be done with faithless worry.

When I lived in the Philadelphia area, I became acquainted with the godly preacher Charles Tindley. The Christians knew him as Brother Tindley. He was both a gifted preacher of God's Word and a hymn writer. Following is a part of his well-known hymn "Leave It There":

If your body suffers pain
And your health you can't regain,
And your soul is almost sinking in despair;
Jesus knows the pain you feel,
He can save and He can heal;
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
When your youthful days are gone
And old age is stealing on,
And your body bends beneath the weight of care;
He will never leave you then,
He'll go with you to the end;
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
Leave it there, leave it there,
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there;
If you trust and never doubt,
He will surely bring you out;
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

We know that feelings are changeable. They are affected by physical pain, by weariness, by need for sleep, by the suffering or death of a loved one. But beloved, our Lord cares. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14). We must learn to roll every care upon Him. And when we do, we will discover that He can do infinitely more for us than we can do for ourselves. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

In conclusion, let me leave you with two verses that I will expound later. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7). Yes, our loving Lord cares!

God ever cares! Not only in life's summer

When skies are bright and days are long and glad;

He cares as much when life is draped in winter,

And heart feels so bereft, and lone, and sad.

God ever cares! His heart is ever tender,

His love will never fail nor show decay;

The love of earth, though strong and deep, may perish,

But His shall never, never pass away.

God ever cares! And thus when life is lonely,

When blessings one time prized are growing dim,

The heart may find a sweet and sunny shelter--

A refuge and a resting place in Him.

God ever cares! And time can never change Him.

His nature is to care, and love, and bless;

And drearest, darkest, emptiest days afford Him

The means to make more sweet His own caress.

(J. Danson Smith)

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